



# Kazakhstan News Bulletin

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Say it in Kazakh:  
*Going to worship on the weekend:  
Where is...? --- ...  
qai zherde?  
... a mosque ---  
Meshit  
... a church? ---  
Shirkeu  
... a synagogue? ---  
Sinagoga  
... a Buddhist temple? ---  
Buddisterdin  
gibatatkhana*

## Dam Splits Aral Sea, New Boost for Northern Part Seen

Engineers and construction workers have completed the Kok Aral dam dividing the beleaguered Aral Sea into two parts in an effort to reverse an environmental disaster many decades in the making and to restore long gone local fishing communities. The US\$85 million project was co-financed by the World Bank and the Government of Kazakhstan, with the bank providing a loan of US\$64.5 million.

“This modern hydro-technical installation will breath new life into an entire region plagued by environmental problems, promote economic growth and improve life conditions and wellbeing for the people there,” President Nursultan Nazarbayev said in a message to workers who had made the project possible. “Let your work be a symbol of the man’s victory over environmental problems and forces of nature.”

The dam formalized the separation of the sea into Kazakhstan’s Smaller Aral in the north, which still receives water from the Syr Dariya, one of Central Asia’s two largest rivers, and Uzbekistan’s Larger Aral in the south which receives smaller amounts of water from the Amu Dariya, the mightier of the two rivers.

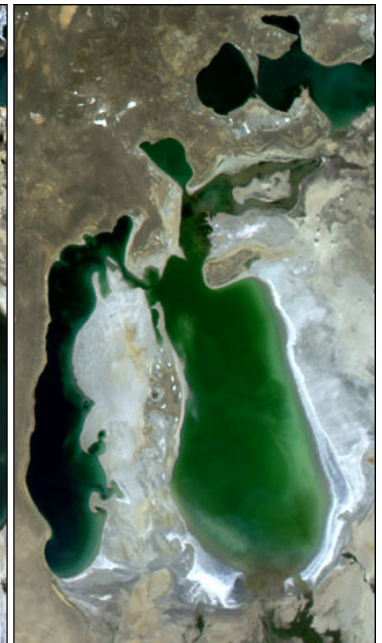
The separation occurred naturally in 1989 after decades of the sea drying up since the 1960s. At that time, a scheme by Soviet planners to use the waters of the region to feed the growing cotton production in Central Asia triggered an environmental disaster.

There still was a small channel between the two seas which carried water from the Smaller to the Larger Aral, which wasn’t doing any good for either. The new dam effectively shut this channel down.

The dam is more than 13 kilometers long, its foundation will be 300 meters wide and its top will be 9 meters wide. Its height is 4 meters on average, and 10 meters above the former channel.



July - September, 1989



August 12, 2003

**Two space views of the Aral Sea.**

The dam has nine cylinders which, if there is a need, will be able to carry 295 cubic meters of water a second into the southern Larger Aral.

According to Adilkhan Karmakhanov, Director of the Aral-Syr Dariya Basin Operations, the water volumes in the Smaller Aral Sea are expected to increase by 11.5 cubic kilometers because of the dam, and eventually reach 29 cubic kilometers. Water level will rise by 42 meters. This would mean 870 square kilometers of land will be inundated helping to restore the flora and fauna of the region.

For decades the two rivers would flood the sea with waters saturated with pesticides from the cotton fields. When the sea dried up, pesticides evaporated and were carried by the winds across wide swathes of land reaching beyond Central Asia and creating one of the largest environmental disaster areas in Eurasia. Cancer rates in the region are reportedly higher than the average in Kazakhstan, while good quality drinking water has long been a major problem. Government officials in Astana and locally, as well as World Bank experts, hope the new dam will reverse these negative trends.

The new dam is meant to ease the economic woe of towns like Aralsk, which used to be a major fishing town but now lays dozens of kilometers away from the water. Experts believe that the water will move to within 10-12 kilometers of Aralsk in two to three years, and the fishing industry could see a revival.

Today about 400 tons of fish are caught each year in the Smaller Aral. Once the full effect of the Dam is felt and the mineral content reduced, fish catches are expected to increase up to 12,000 tons annually. Already, the Koszhar fish farm in the estuary of Syr Dariya boasts close to 1 million young fish which are sent to smaller local lakes but could be sent to the north Aral.

## **Kazakhstan to Join BTC Pipeline in October**

Vladimir Shkolnik, Kazakhstan's Energy and Mineral Resources Minister, said his country will join the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan (BTC) pipeline agreement in October 2005, adding yet another major outlet for booming Kazakh oil production to reach the world markets.

Speaking in Aktau on August 4, Minister Shkolnik said the Aktau-Baku segment of this pipeline transportation system, which will connect Kazakhstan with Azerbaijan across the Caspian Sea, will operate independently. It will require a new storage and loading terminal in Kuryk, a port 76 kilometers south east of Aktau, and connecting pipelines. Docking facilities in Kuryk will also be built.

The system's throughput capacity will be 30 million tons of oil annually. Initially, seven and a half million tons of oil will be shipped a year. The cost of the construction will be determined after the intergovernmental agreement is signed in October. The new system is slated to be built by the time the first commercial oil comes online at Kashagan, the huge oil field the Kazakhstan's sector of the Caspian, in 2007-2008.

The BTC pipeline stretches for 1,767 kilometers from the Caspian to the Mediterranean, including 442 kilometers in Azerbaijan, 248 kilometers in Georgia and 1,076 kilometers in Turkey. The throughput capacity is 50 million tons of oil a year. The pipeline has been being filled with oil since May 2005, and the first tanker with BTC-transported oil is due to leave Ceyhan in October.

BTC shareholders include BP with 30.1%, State Oil Company of the Azerbaijani Republic (SOCAR) with 25%, Unocal of the U.S. (8.9%), Statoil of Norway (8.71%), TPAO of Turkey (6.53%), Itochu of Japan (3.4%), Amerada Hess (2.36%), ENI (5%), ConocoPhillips (2.5%), Inpex (2.5%), and Total (5%). Of those companies, ENI, ConocoPhillips, Inpex and Total are part of the Kashagan consortium, while the U.S.-based Chevron with extensive operations in two other largest oil fields in Kazakhstan, is expected to formalize its purchase of Unocal shortly.

## **Kazakhstan May Accede to WTO in 2006, President Says**

President Nursultan Nazarbayev said Kazakhstan has real opportunities to join the World Trade Organization (WTO) next year.

The President made his comment in an August 4 meeting with farmers and businesspeople in the major agricultural and industrial region of Kostanai in the north of the country. He said domestic producers need to introduce international standards more aggressively in order for the country to be able to join the WTO, especially in processing agricultural products.

“We must work more actively in this direction and then in 2006 Kazakhstan can join the WTO,” the President said.

Agricultural policies remain an issue Kazakhstan needs to negotiate with a group of trading partners, including the U.S., before it can join the world trade bloc.

## **Asian Security Organization Takes Measured Steps**

Senior officials from the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA) met in Kazakhstan August 2-5 to discuss ways of developing this fledgling security organization.

Representatives from more than 20 nations participated in the meeting, up to the level of deputy foreign ministers and ambassadors from 17 member countries and a number of observers. In addition to Kazakhstan, membership includes Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, China, Kyrgyzstan, India, Iran, Israel, Mongolia, Pakistan, Russia, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan among others.

Kazakhstan's President Nursultan Nazarbayev originally proposed establishing a security organization for Asia modeled after the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), in his maiden speech to the UN General Assembly in 1992. A decade later, following many rounds of laborious discussions, the first CICA summit took place in Almaty in June 2002 bringing together leaders of countries that were at war with other recently and are still at loggerheads. The meeting was particularly timely in easing tensions between India and Pakistan, a sign of the role the organization may play in the future.

At the most recent meeting, officials discussed proposals to implement a Catalog of Measures of Confidence approved by CICA foreign ministers in 2004 and worked to develop terms of reference for a permanent CICA Secretariat to be based in Almaty.

Askar Shakirov, Kazakhstan's Deputy Foreign Minister and chair of the meeting called it an important opportunity to discuss pressing issues for CICA.

The second summit of the organizations will take place in Kazakhstan next year.

## **Orphaned Kazakh Sisters Reunite by Chance**

BERKELEY FAMILY ADOPTS GIRL, HOSTS ANOTHER;  
DNA TESTS CONFIRM RESEMBLANCE NOT A FLUKE

By Jackie Burrell, Knight Ridder, August 6, 2005

Call it destiny or maybe an alignment of stars and planets. How else to explain the circumstances that placed two orphans from Kazakhstan -- sisters abandoned at birth with no idea that the other existed -- in the same Berkeley home this summer?

John and Robin Dalrymple call it a miracle.

“It's all so sudden and miraculous,” said Robin. “They just hugged each other and cried and cried.”

The Dalrymples already had three children when they adopted Olya from a Kazakh orphanage three years ago. Background information was scant, and it was supposedly her mother's first pregnancy.

“All the records said, ‘No siblings,’” said John Dalrymple. “She had no family.”

But she did. In a staggering twist of fate, 12-year-old Raisa arrived last month to spend the summer in the Dalrymples' Berkeley home through KidSave International's Summer Miracles -- the same program that brought Olya into the Dalrymples' lives.

The girls' resemblance was unbelievable. Their hair and eye color are different, but their face shapes, dimples and grins are identical.

The DNA results were 99.99956 percent conclusive: Olya and Raisa are sisters.

After they found out the news, the girls disappeared into their bedroom with the Dalrymples following to make sure they were all right.

“They were holding these Kazakhstani dolls,... crying their eyes out,” John Dalrymple said.

There will be mountains of paperwork. The finances are a big problem -- foreign adoption is expensive. The house is already full. But the alternative is unthinkable.

“We’re going to keep her,” John Dalrymple said. “This is just too much of a good thing.”

Click [here](#) for the article in its original location.

## **Kazakhstan Confirms Bird Flu Outbreak**

An outbreak of bird flu has been observed in Kazakhstan, the country’s Agriculture Ministry announced August 8.

The Ministry said: “A report from the Agriculture Research Institute of Kazakhstan showed that tissue and blood serums taken from wild and domestic birds in the Irtysh district of the Pavlodar region contain highly contagious bird flu.” Pavlodar is in the north eastern part of the country near the border with Russia which has also suffered outbreaks.

Foreign experts also examined the samples, the ministry said.

Authorities introduced a quarantine in the region where the outbreak struck. The epizootic situation remains normal, the Ministry said.

Hundreds of birds died of bird flu at the Nan farm in Kazakhstan earlier. A former employee at the farm became sick and was suspected of having bird flu, but the diagnosis wasn’t confirmed.

## **Things to Watch:**

- The Constitutional Council will review the date for the next presidential election and the President’s request to check the constitutionality of two draft laws regulating nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) on Friday August 12.
- Anti-terrorist officials of the member countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) will converge in Aktau on the Caspian Sea on August 16-19 for *Caspian Anti-Terror 2005*, a command and staff exercise to improve coordination in fighting terrorism in the region. The Caspian Sea is famous for abundant resources of oil and gas. Five nations border the sea, including Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, Iran, Azerbaijan, and Russia. Specific scenario during the exercise would envision freeing hostages and neutralizing criminals at oil-related facilities in the Aktau International Sea Port.
- Kazakhstan is getting ready to celebrate the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its Constitution, adopted by an overwhelming majority in a nationwide referendum in 1995, on August 30.

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